

# Abalone House, you'll hardly want to leave

By  Brian Berkman: [contributing editor, travel](#)

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With its white-washed houses and ubiquitous blue shutters, Paternoster fancies itself part of the Greek Isles. Don't hold this against this charming West Coast seaside village as it punches way about its weight in the restaurants worth eating at and interesting shops at which to spend your money stakes.



Bar Area

Accommodation is plentiful. I think I counted a mere handful of properties that were occupied by full-time residents and not available for weekend rentals. All of which is to say that competition for somewhere to stay is as high as the kids who run after your car waving ill-gotten lobsters.

Abalone Boutique Hotel bucks the Nordic fisherman's cottage interior trend with vibrant colours and lavish textures. Oversized Tretchikoff maidens dominate as do massed blue ceramics, while a collection of antique silverware invites the eye at every turn. Theirs is a maximist look.

There are 10 suites at Abalone and all are bigger than they need to be. I suppose that's part of the appeal of this five-star boutique hotel where they over deliver on everything. The food at their Saffron restaurant is way better than you hope it will be and the service hits the sweet spot of being attentive and intelligent without being invasive. I did miss having slippers supplied in the room, but then again there's under-floor heating so it hardly matters.

## Elegant and hard to resist

Be sure to be there for their Afternoon Tea which they mistakenly call High Tea. Whatever the name, this experience of sweet and savoury afternoon treats delivered on a tiered platter to your table in the Orchid Room overlooking the lavender hedge and the sweeping sea beyond is both elegant and hard to resist. I know this as I spent an agonising period watching my spouse enjoy salmon-filled mini croissants, cheese quiches, carrot cake, roast chicken canapés and divine individual cakes and tarts. My no-sugar and low-carb rule meant I could just watch with envy after wolfing down the fruit skewers.

When it came to dinner, the chef tailored items to suit me. He even created a fruit dessert platter that would have left a certain Master Chef judge with eyes the size of saucers. Fabulous.

There's an over-the-top library/boardroom with 16 high back chairs and a dramatic pagoda-style fish tank which would perfectly suit a meeting on the C-suite and wi-fi is available throughout the property for guests. If there is a downside to staying at Abalone, it is this: with such appealing lodgings and compelling food offering we hardly wanted to leave the building. So, if you want somewhere from where to explore Paternoster perhaps choose a less fabulous spot.

For more info, go to [www.abalonehouse.co.za](http://www.abalonehouse.co.za).

## ABOUT BRIAN BERKMAN: CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, TRAVEL

Brian Berkman can be contacted on 083-441-8765 or email [Brian@BrianBerkman.com](mailto:Brian@BrianBerkman.com).

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